

REMARKS

Claims 1-26 are all the claims pending in the application. Claim 3 is the only claim that has been examiner in the subject Office Action.

By way of this Amendment, Applicants have added a new Abstract which is directed to the method claimed herein, as requested by the Examiner.

Applicants have also amended the title to recite “METHOD OF DETERMINING THE ACCEPTABILITY OF THE PRESS-CONTACTING OF A TERMINAL USING REFERENCE DATA.”

As noted above, claim 3 is the only claim that has been examined in the subject Office Action. In paragraph 6 of the Office Action, the Examiner has objected to claim 3 under § 101 contending that claim 3 merely claims an abstract idea, rather than a practical application of the idea. Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner’s § 101 rejection based on the following.

Claim 3 is, certainly, not merely directed to an abstract idea, as the Examiner asserts. Specifically, as recited in the preamble, claim 3 is directed to “A method of determining acceptability of a press-contact terminal including press contact blades which are separated from each other when the wire is inserted between the press-contact blades so that a core wire of the wire is electrically connected to the press contact terminal.” To that end, claim 3 recites a number of concrete steps. The first step is that of storing reference data which shows a relationship between displacement of the press-contact blades when the wire is brought into press contact with a normal one of the press-contact terminals and contact loads between the

press contact blades and the coil wire. The next step is a concrete step of inserting the wire between the press contact blades of the press contact terminal as an object to be inspected. This step is specifically illustrated, for example, in Figure 7 of the subject application. The next step recited in claim 3 is a concrete step of measuring the displacement of the press contact blades caused by insertion of the wire. Based on this measurement, the final step is the step of determining the acceptability of the press-contact terminal and the object to be inspected by predicting the contact loads between the press contact blades of the press contact terminal as the object to be inspected based on the measured displacements and their reference data. Naturally, this step provides important and useful information in assessing whether or not the wire has been properly inserted between the press contact blades in such a ways to ensure that the contact press contact load is appropriate. Accordingly, we propose traversing the § 101 rejection for the reasons discussed above.

The Examiner has also rejected claim 3 under § 102(b) as being anticipated by Gloe, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,271,254). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for the following reasons.

Gloe, et al. is simply not relevant to the invention recited in claim 3. As indicated in the Abstract, Gloe, et al. is concerned with assessing the quality of a crimped connection produced by the application of a crimping force F to a crimping barrel WB of an electrical terminal T with a wire W therein. *See*, Figure 5 of Gloe, et al. This is achieved by measuring the peak value PV of a crimping force and comparing it with the reference value. More specifically, as described in the Abstract, the incremental values IV of the crimping force are measured during its application

and are stored in the form of an actual crimping force value envelope EA, such as shown in Figure 10 of Gloe, et al. The incremental values of an ideal crimping force are measured during its application and are stored in the form of an ideal crimping force value envelope EI. The envelopes EA and EI are then compared to determine the quality of the crimping connection. Thus, Gloe, et al. is concerned with comparing the actual force curve associated with the crimping operation against an ideal force curve associated with the crimping operation.

In contrast, as noted above with respect to the § 101 rejection, claim 3 does not relate to a comparison of the force curves. Rather, claim 3 is concerned with measuring the displacement of the press-contact blades caused by insertion of the wire as a way to determine whether the resulting force is within an acceptable range. In short, Gloe, et al. is not at all pertinent to claim 3, as it does not teach or suggest the storing step, the measuring step or the determining steps recited therein. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully traverse the § 102 rejection based on Gloe, et al.

As to paragraph number 9 of the Office Action, Applicants have not amended the claims herein.

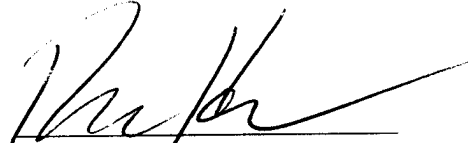
In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. Appln. No.: 10/811,977

Atty. Docket No.: Q80694

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



Brian W. Hannon
Registration No. 32,778

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

WASHINGTON OFFICE

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